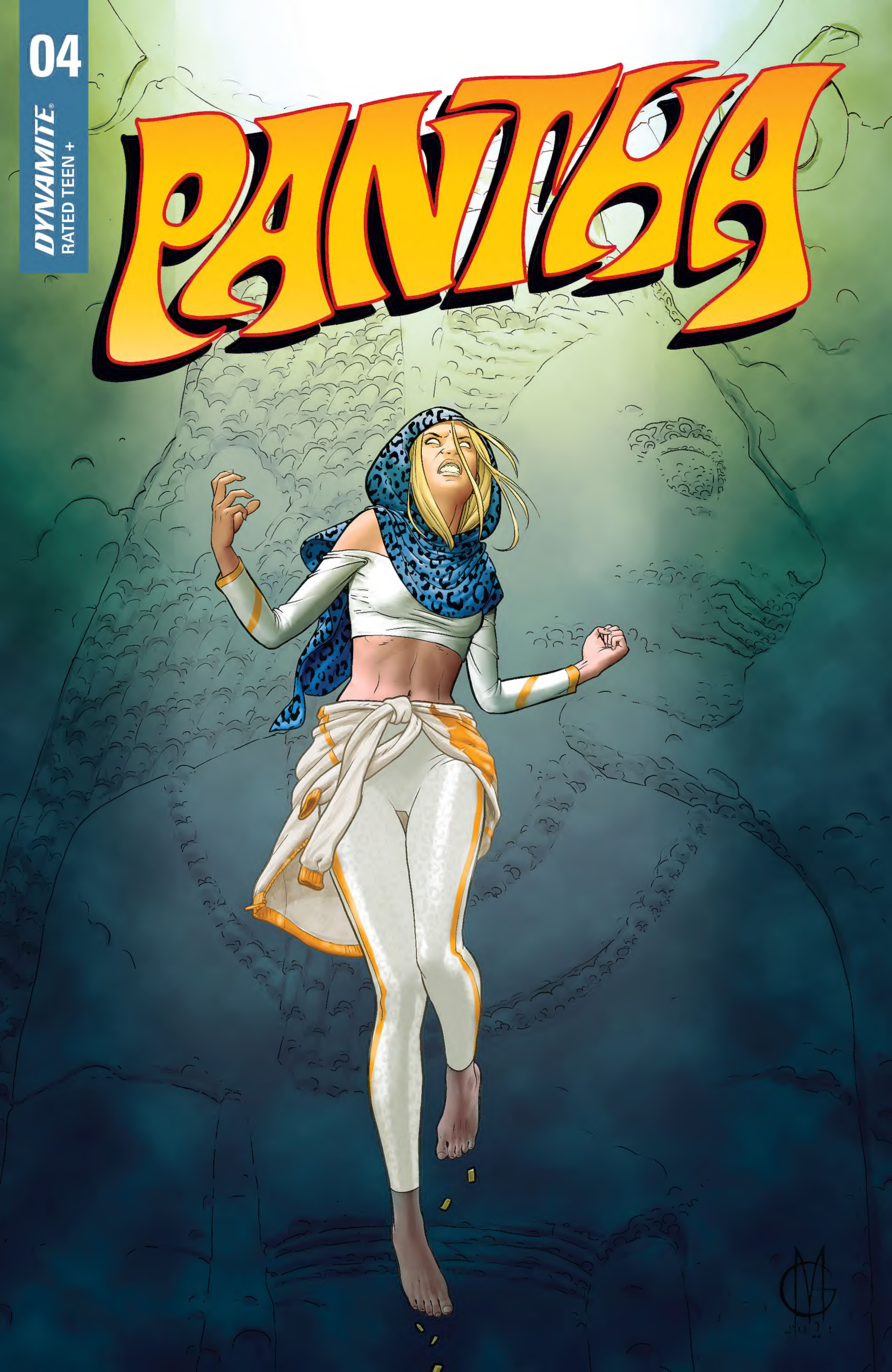
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PANTHA

Once queen to Pharoah Diogenes Hamset II, Pantha saw her future threatened by the birth of a son to the Pharoah and one of his consorts and turned to the goddess Sekhmet to grant her the eyes of all Egypt's felines. Then in an act of utter evil, she had every male child in the land slaughtered. Angered, Sekhmet cursed Pantha to eternal life, trapped between the forms of human and panther, forever to be tormented by her deeds…

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CAIRO, EGYPT. TODAY.

HE NEVER IMAGINED THAT HIS CREATIONS WOULD HAVE GROWN AS MUCH AS THEY HAD.

EMERGING ALONE FROM THE PRIMORDIAL WATERS, THE GOD ATUM LONGED FOR SOMETHING MORE, AND FROM THE DARKNESS OF THE ABYSS CREATED--

--LIFE.

FIRST HE BIRTHED GODS, BEINGS IN HIS OWN DIVINE IMAGE, AND WATCHED AS THEY DID AS HE HAD DONE, BRINGING FORTH THE LIFE THAT WOULD COME TO POPULATE THE WORLD.

AND IN WHAT SEEMED LIKE THE BLINK OF AN EYE, HUMANITY FLOURISHED AND GREAT CITIES SPROUTED UP, COVERING THE PLANET.

AHMED, WHO IS THAT YOU ARE CARVING?

I THOUGHT I TAUGHT YOU BETTER THAN THAT, MY LITTLE FRIEND. THIS IS BASTET.

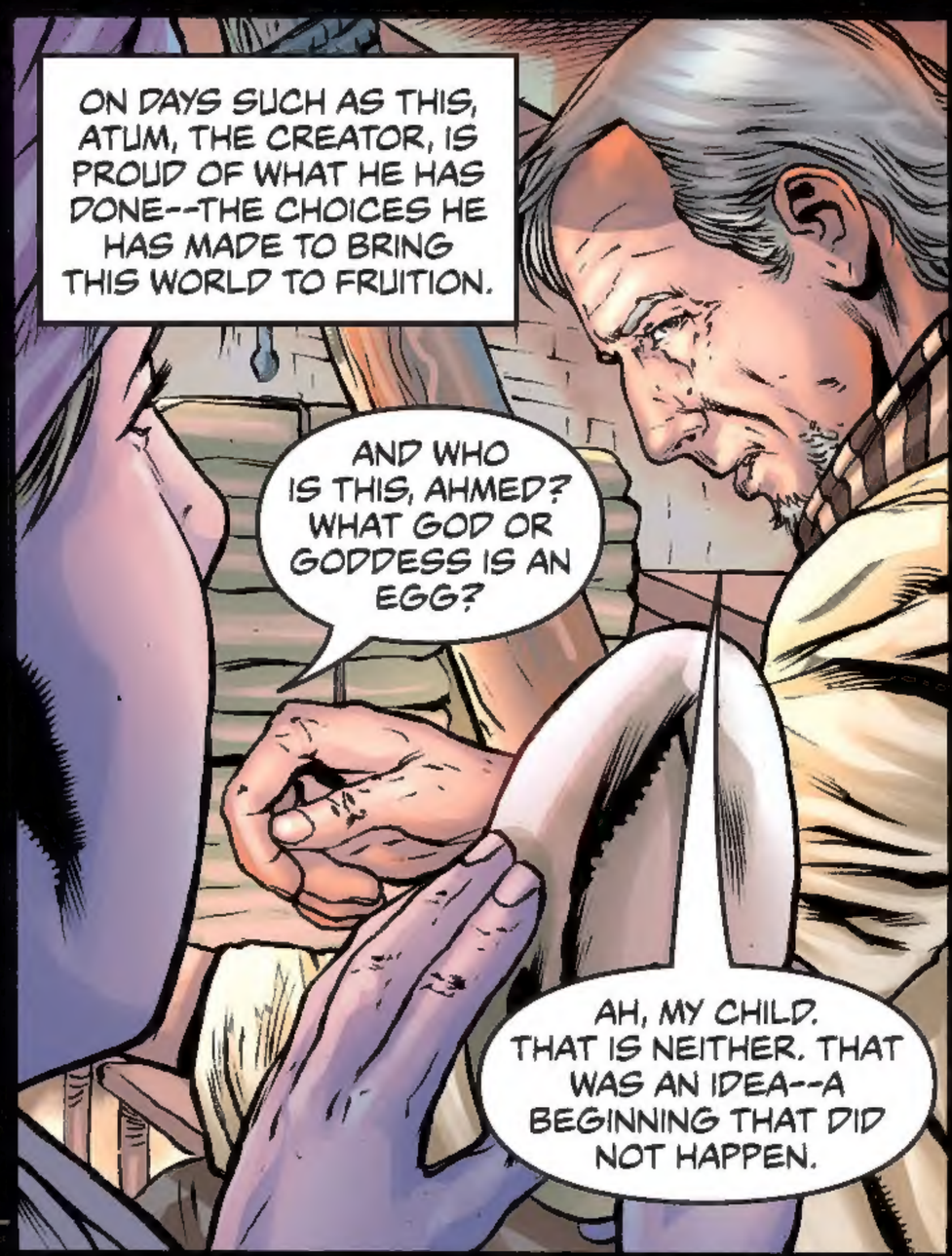
ATUM LOST HIMSELF IN THE WILDS OF THE WORLD, MARVELING AT ALL THAT HAD COME SINCE FIRST EMERGING FROM THE PRIMEVAL DEPTHS.

SHE IS THE PROTECTOR OF THE HOME, FERTILITY, AND CATS ... AND SHE WAS ALSO AN ACOLYTE TO THE GREAT GODDESS, SEKHMET.

AND SEKHMET WAS AN ANGRY GODDESS OF WAR.

SHE WAS INDEED, YES.

HE HAS ENJOYED LIVING AMONGST HUMANITY AS AHMED, A SIMPLE ARTISAN, OBSERVING THEIR TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS, THEIR ACTS OF COMPASSION LARGE AND SMALL.



"FROM THIS EGG WOULD COME THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS.

"BUT AT THE LAST MINUTE, THE GOD ATUM--SENSING THAT PERHAPS THIS NEW LIFE SHOULD NOT COME FROM THE DARKEST DEPTHS, BUT FROM A PLACE OF ENLIGHTENMENT--CHANGED HIS MIND."

HE THINKS OF ME AGAIN ... THINKS ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ...

...WHAT THIS WORLD WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE IF SHAPED BY DARKNESS.

MY TIME DRAWS NEAR.

AND KNOWS DEEP DOWN HE MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE.

SOON I WILL HAVE ALL THAT I NEED...

AND FOR THE BRIEFEST OF MOMENTS THERE IS EXCITEMENT, A BELIEF FORTIFIED THAT EVEN AFTER COUNTLESS MILLENNIA ON THIS WORLD...

IT IS QUITE UNWISE TO SNEAK UP ON STRANGERS, FOR THEY MAY PROVE FAR STRANGER THAN YOU...

...THERE WERE STILL THINGS THAT COULD SURPRISE HIM.

GREETINGS, FATHER OF ALL THINGS

THE GREAT TA-NAKHT WOULD HAVE WORDS WITH YOU!

ELSEWHERE, WITHIN THE HOUSE OF WOE...

THE HOUSE EXISTS IN THAT SPECIAL PLACE BETWEEN THE HERE AND THE THERE. ONCE, IT HAD BEEN A GODDESS, HESTIA, A GREEK DEITY OF HEARTH AND HOME.

BUT OVER TIME, AS ITS WORSHIPPERS WANED, IT DECIDED IT WOULD BE SOMETHING ELSE.

IT WOULD BE A RESPITE FOR THOSE IN NEED OF SHELTER, A PLACE WHERE THE DIVINE COULD GATHER--

--DURING TIMES OF STORM.

AND THERE WAS INDEED A STORM COMING.

SORRY TO BARGE IN, BUT WE HAVE A BIT OF AN EMERGENCY.

GIDEON ROTH, THE CURRENT MASTER OF THE DOMICILE, WAS NOT FOND OF UNEXPECTED COMPANY, BUT REALIZING THE SITUATION, HE HAD LITTLE CHOICE TO ACCEPT THEM.

OUR UNKNOWN ENEMY HAS BECOME EMBOLDENED, ATTACKING US IN OUR EFFORTS TO PROCURE WEAPONS.

SAMIRA AND I WERE THERE TO WARN SET ABOUT THE THREAT, BUT HE HAD OTHER IDEAS. THEN HIS COMPOUND WAS ATTACKED BY GIANT BUGS, SHIT HIT THE FAN AND SAMIRA WAS HURT.

THIS PLACE HAD MANY NAMES OVER THE TIME IT HAD BEEN A DWELLING. CURRENTLY, ROTH CALLED THIS PLACE THE HOUSE OF WOE...

you gotta help her!

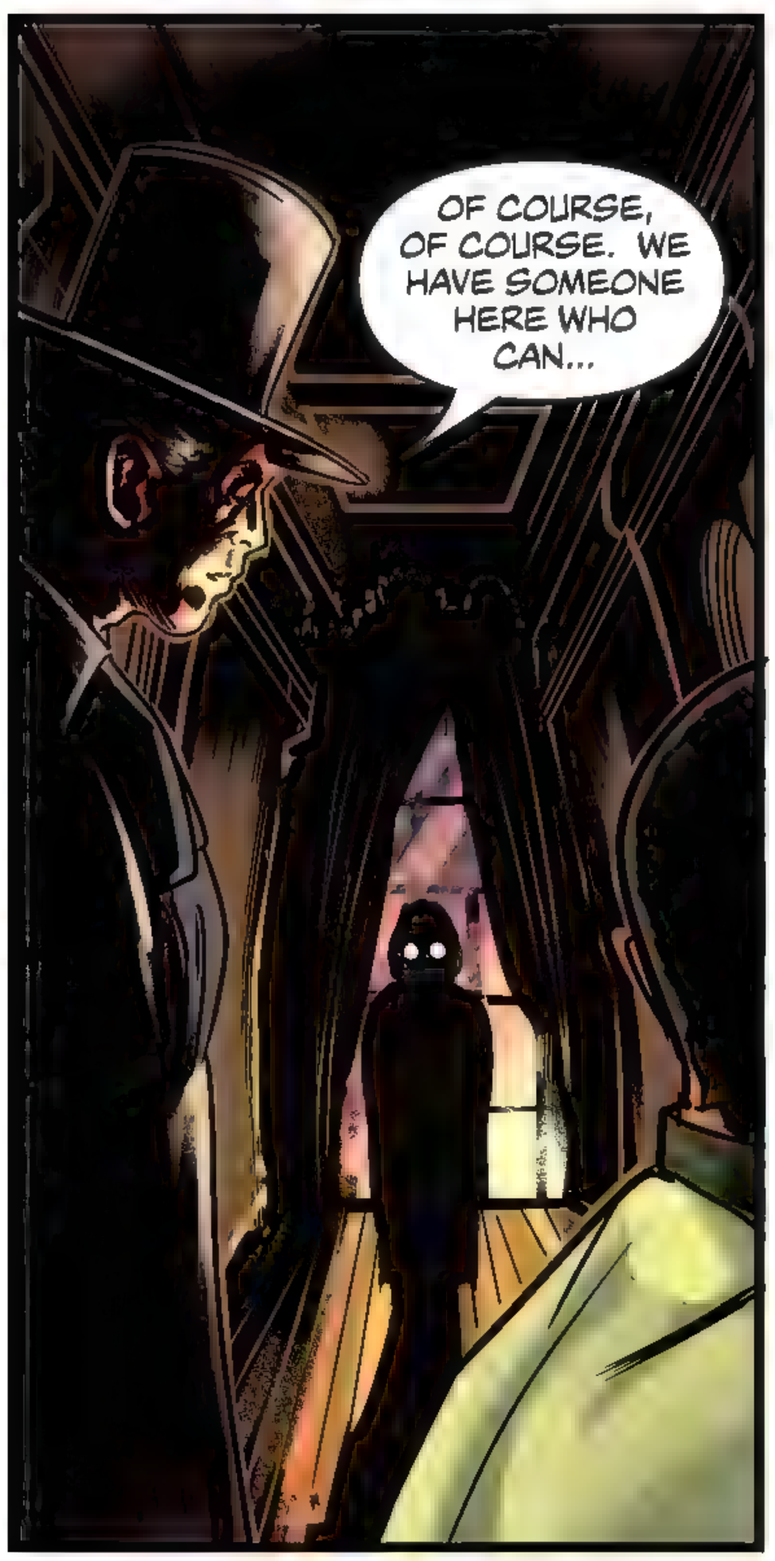
GIANT BUGS, YOU SAY?

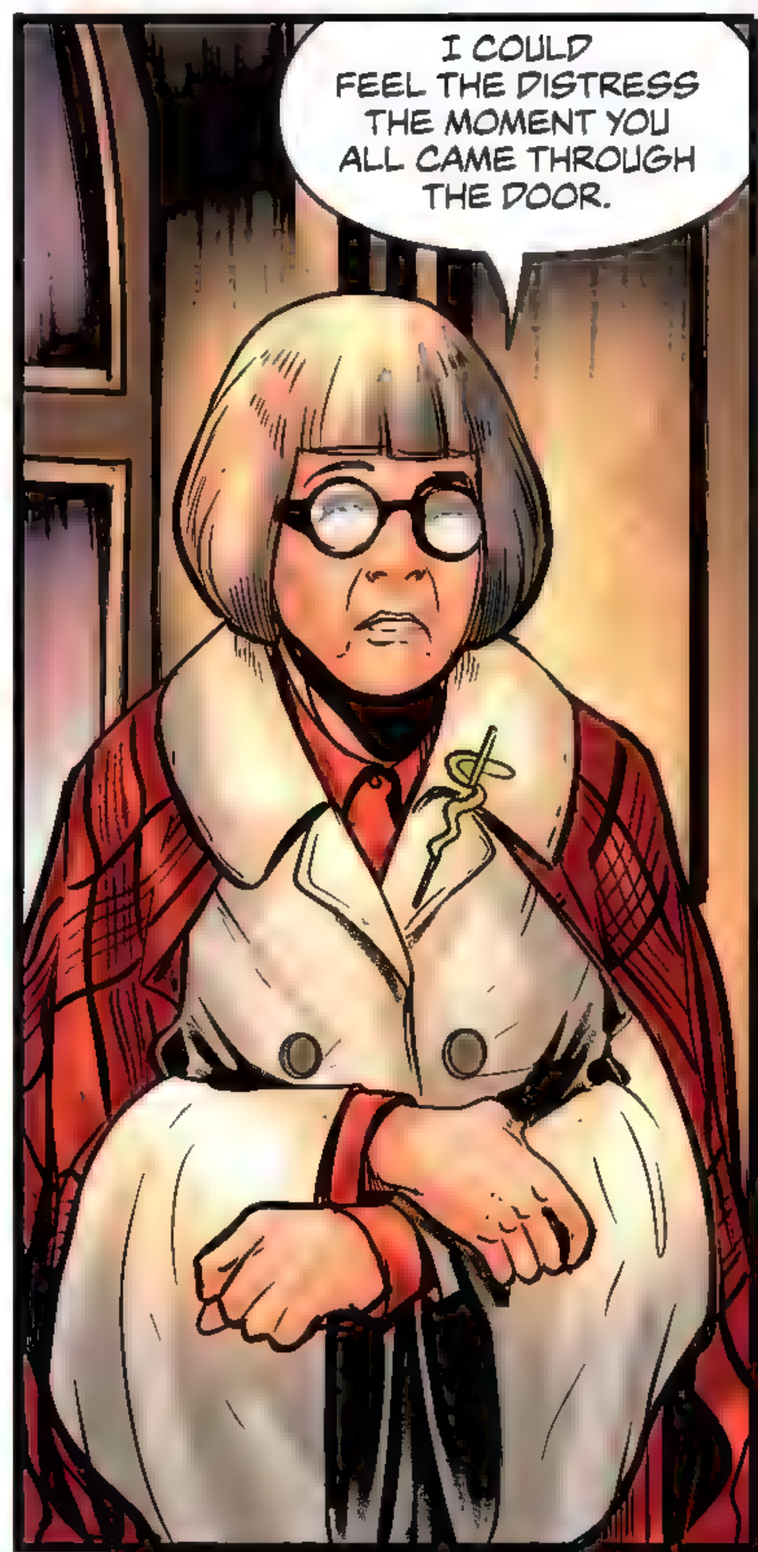
BUT WHAT WOULD ONE EXPECT FROM A GOD OF TERROR?
TO HIS FELLOW DEITIES, HE WAS BA-PEF. BUT TO A FLEDGLING HUMANITY, HE WAS SO MUCH MORE.
HE WAS THE UNKNOWN, THE THING THAT CAME IN THE NIGHT, THAT MADE THEM HUDDLE TOGETHER BY THE LIGHT OF THE FIRE . . .
HE WAS THE FEAR OF REPRISAL FROM AN ANGRY GOD, THE LIVING NIGHTMARE THAT THRIVED IN THE SHADOWS BENEATH A BED.
AND AS THE CENTURIES MOVED ON HE FED ON THEIR TERRORS IN DIFFERENT WAYS . . .
LOREM IPSUM
. . . THE SUFFOCATING FEAR OF THEIR OWN MORTALITY... OF SICKNESS AND WHAT WAS TO FOLLOW WHEN THE LIGHT OF LIFE WAS EXTINGUISHED.
. . . . PROJECTED UPON SCREENS AS THEY SAT IN THE DARK, VERY MUCH LIKE THEIR ANCESTORS HAD . . .
...THIS THEY DID FOR FUN--FOR THE THRILL OF IT.
BUT, HOWEVER IT WAS DONE, THE GOD OF TERROR WAS SATED.
HOW WONDERFULLY TERRIFYING.
PLAY

CERTAINLY, WE'LL HELP YOU. THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE.
THE HOUSE OF WOE IS OPEN TO ANY AND ALL SEEKING SOLACE FROM OUR UNKNOWN ASSAILANT.

WAS HOPING YOU WOULD SAY THAT. FIGHTING AGAINST THE BUGS FORCED US TO DIP INTO GODLY ENERGIES WE HAVEN'T HAD TO EXPEND IN AGES. WE COULD ALL USE SOME REST.

I DON'T MEAN TO BE IMPOLITE, BUT COULD SOMEBODY PLEASE SEE TO my friend?

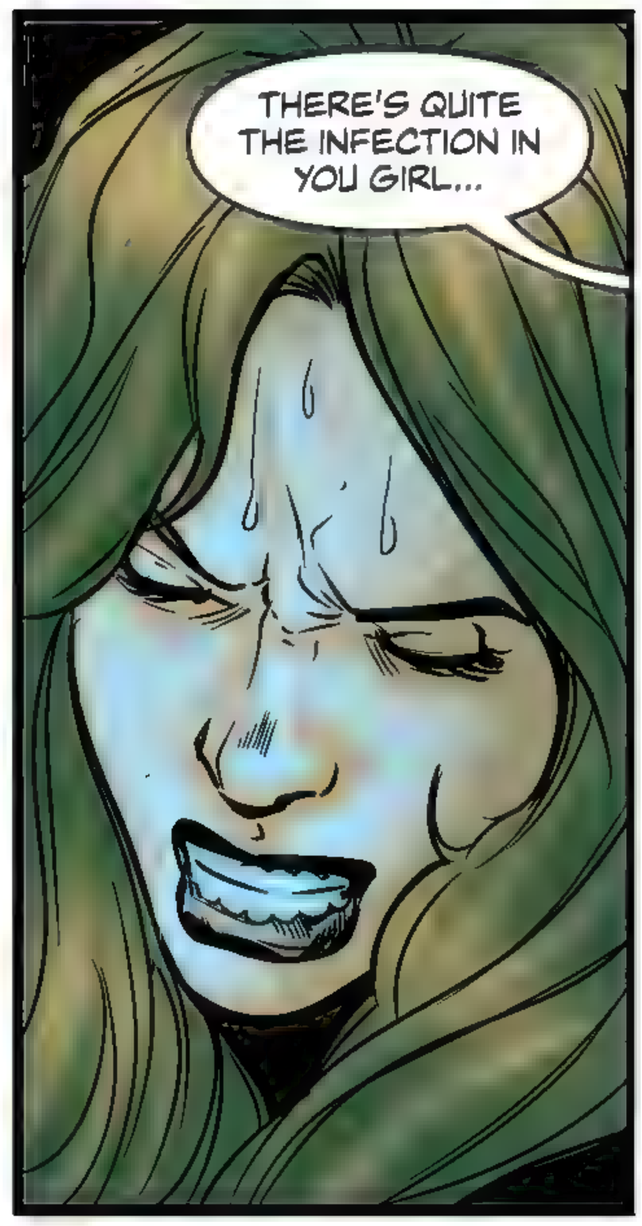

OF COURSE, OF COURSE. WE HAVE SOMEONE HERE WHO CAN...


I COULD FEEL THE DISTRESS THE MOMENT YOU ALL CAME THROUGH THE DOOR.

LEAVE HER TO EIR. IF SHE IS TO SURVIVE, I WILL BE THE ONE TO PULL HER THROUGH.

I HAVE THE UTMOST FAITH IN THE NORTHERN GODDESS'S TALENTS, AND YOU SHOULD TOO.

"NOW THAT YOUR FRIEND IS IN GOOD HANDS, LET ME SHOW YOU TO YOUR ROOMS."


THERE'S QUITE THE INFECTION IN YOU GIRL...

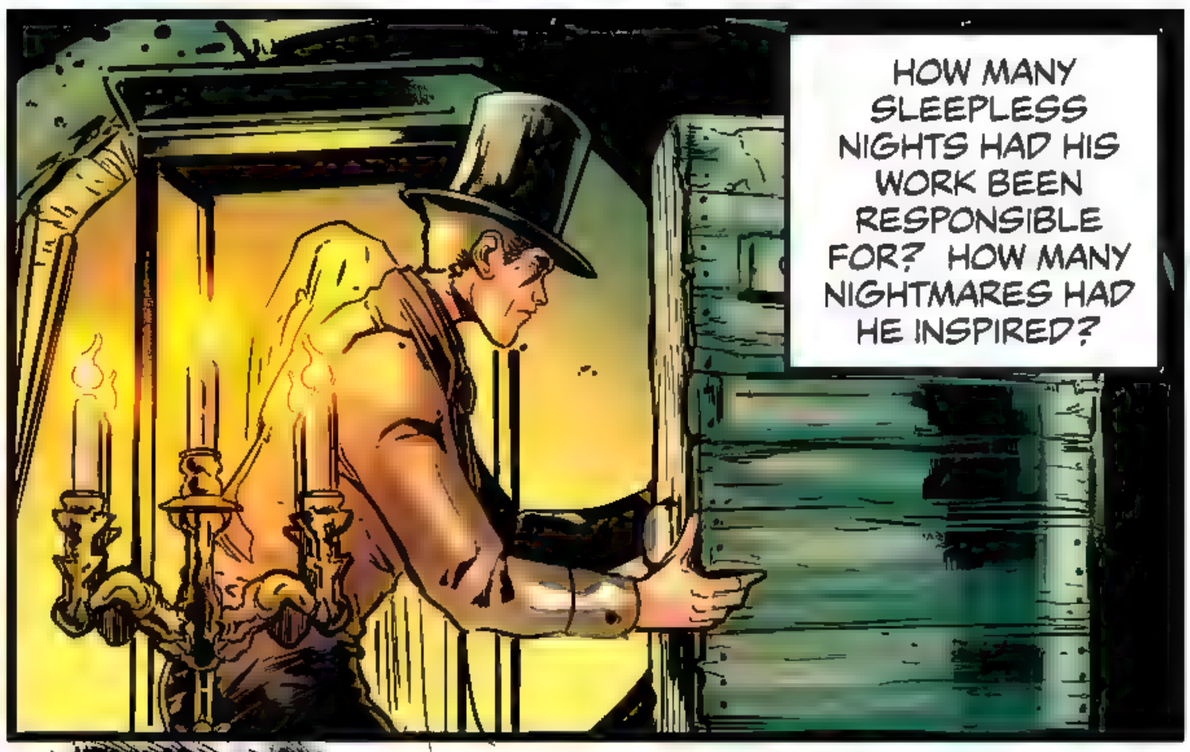
...LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO TO DRAW IT OUT.
"SOME REST IS INDEED WHAT YOU'LL NEED--"

--IF WE'RE GOING CONTINUE TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST OUR MYSTERIOUS ADVERSARY.
NOT TOO LONG THOUGH, I FEEL THAT THE LONGER WE ALLOW THIS THREAT TO EXIST...
OUR ASSES ARE IN SOME SERIOUS DANGER.
A LITTLE NAP SHOULD HELP RECHARGE THE BATTERIES.

BE SURE TO LET ME KNOW IF THERE'S ANY CHANGES TO SAMIRA'S CONDITION.

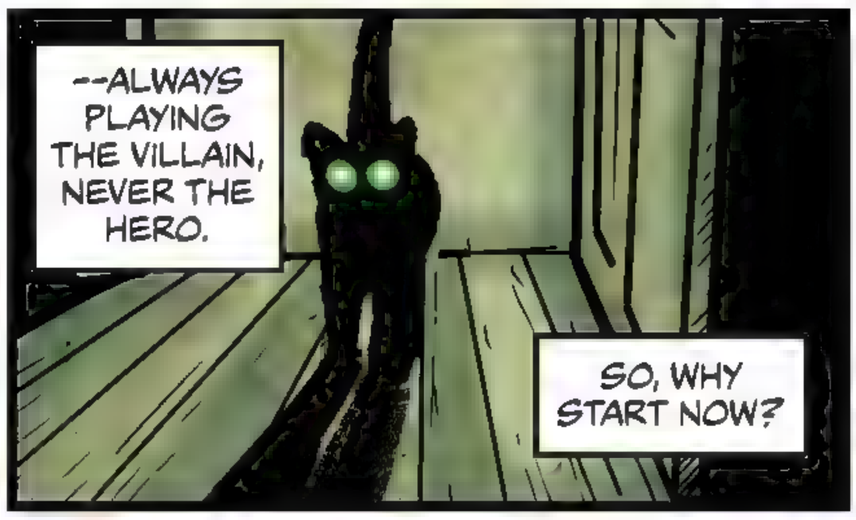
YOU'LL BE THE FIRST TO KNOW. NOW REST, RECUPERATE. THERE'S A WAR TO BE FOUGHT AND WE NEED OUR WARRIORS HEALTHY.

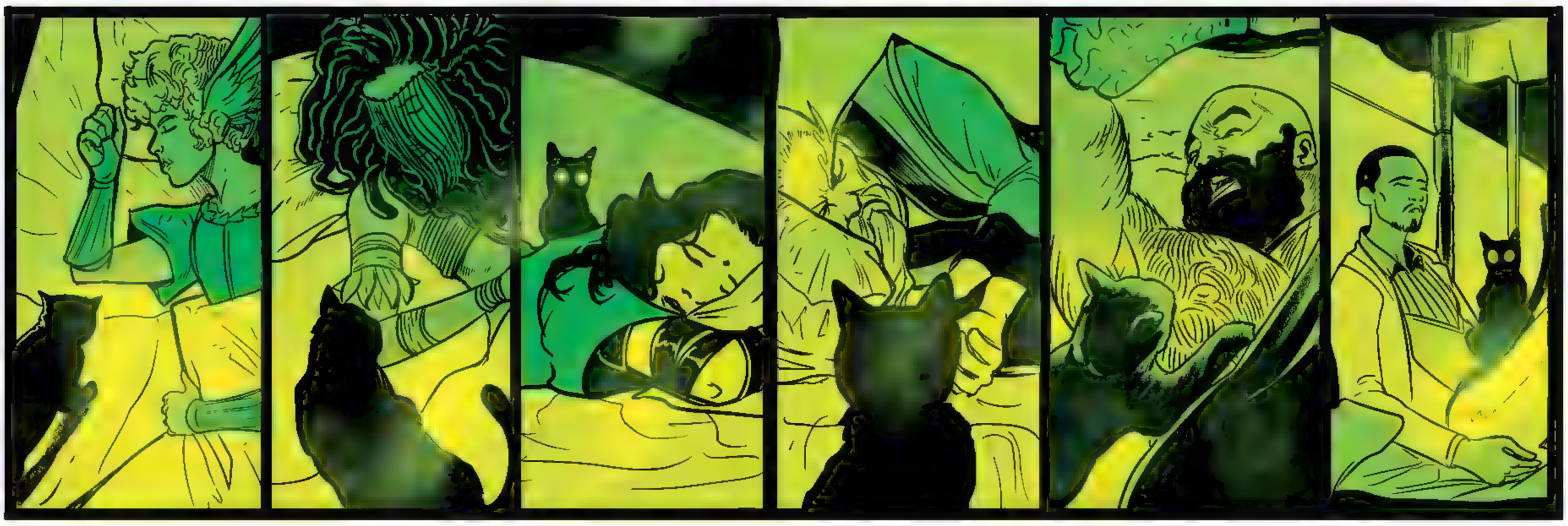
IN HIS LONG EXISTENCE, BA-PEF HAD NEVER BEEN A HERO.



NOW HERE HE WAS, THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE OF WOE--

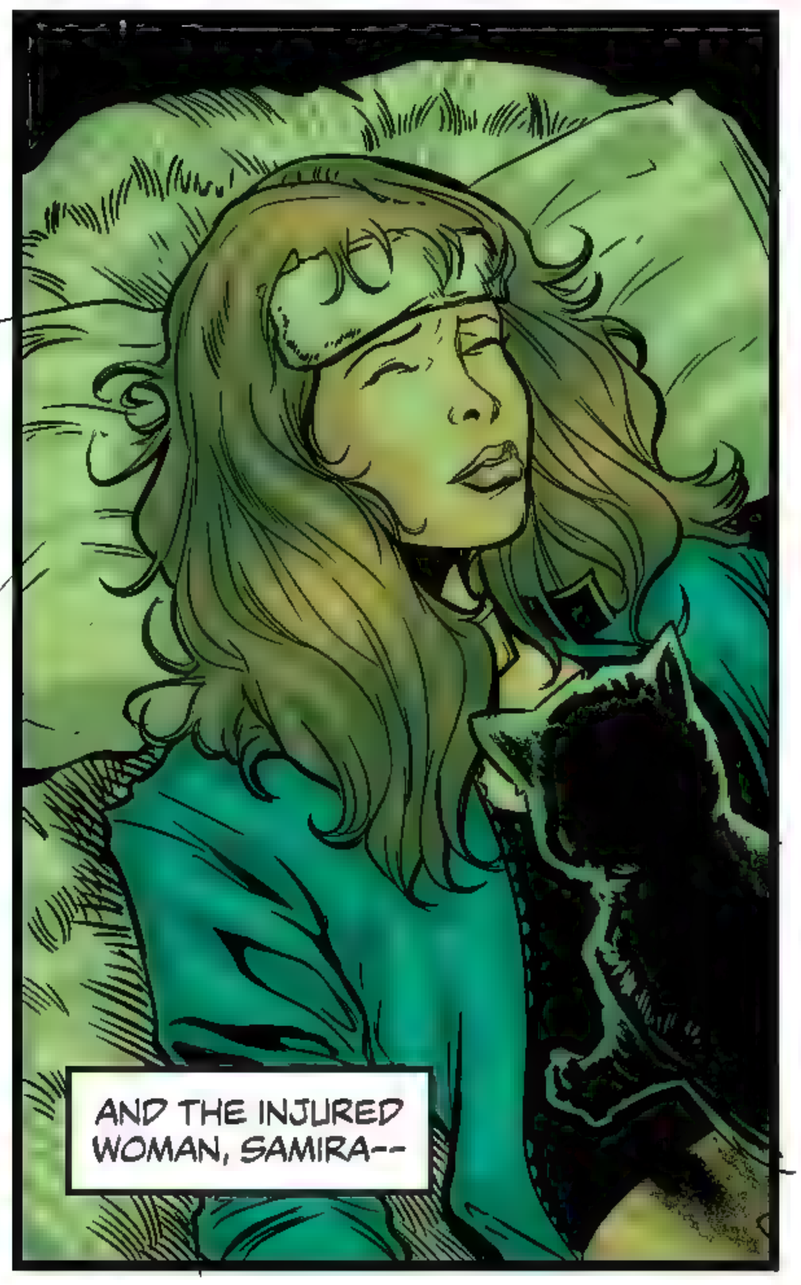
--PROVIDING SHELTER TO THOSE IN THE MIDST OF CONFLICT WITH AN UNKNOWN ENEMY.





THE CATS ARE HIS CONDUITS, A WAY IN WHICH TO COLLECT THE DELICIOUS FEAR OF THOSE WHO HAVE SOUGHT OUT SAFETY IN THE HOUSE OF WOE.
HE COULD SENSE IT AS SOON AS THEY ENTERED, BARELY ABLE TO CONTAIN HIS HUNGER UNTIL THE APPROPRIATE TIME.

THE FEARS OF GODS WERE SO MUCH MORE SATISFYING THAN MERE MORTALS.


AND THE INJURED WOMAN, SAMIRA--

--HE'D NEVER FELT EMOTIONS QUITE LIKE HERS BEFORE...

SAMIRA'S FEAR BLOOMED LIKE ANCIENT SEDIMENT VIOLENTLY STIRRED FROM THE BOTTOM OF A STAGNANT POOL.
HAVE YOU SUFFERED ENOUGH THIS DAY, MY QUEEN? I THINK NOT!
THESE ARE THE MEMORIES OF THE PAST, OF THE ATROCITIES SHE PERPETRATED TO HOLD ONTO POWER AND THE GODDESS SHE OFFENDED WITH HER ARROGANCE.
GET AWAY!
THEY HAVE TEETH, CLAWS, STINK OF DEATH--AND THEY BITE.
YEEEEARRRGGGHHH!

BA-PEF'S INTENTIONS WERE NEVER TO BETRAY HIS BRETHREN, BUT THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED TO HIM WAS TOO GREAT TO IGNORE.
PERHAPS THE MORTALISTS WERE CORRECT. MAYBE IT WAS BEST TO ACCEPT ONE'S FATE AND PASS GRACEFULLY FROM EXISTENCE . . .
HIS INFLUENCE UPON THE WORLD WAS WANING, AND HE WASN'T QUITE SURE THAT A REINVENTION WOULD BE ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN HIM.
. . . BUT ALL THAT CHANGED WHEN HE WAS TAKEN BY THE GOD EATER . . .
...WHEN HE WAS BROUGHT BEFORE THAT WHICH WAS CALLED...
...TA-NAKHT!

HE REMEMBERED THE TASTE OF HIS OWN FEAR--HIS OWN TERROR--
--AS HE WAS BROUGHT BEFORE THE ANCIENT ENTITY. HERE WAS A POWER THAT HAD EXISTED BEFORE ALL THINGS. . . A POWER NOW ON THE RISE.
AND BA-PEF SAW IN IT SOMETHING THAT HE HAD NOT SEEN FOR HIMSELF IN QUITE SOME TIME ... A FUTURE.
IT WAS THEN AND THERE THAT HE SWORE HIS DEVOTION TO THE DARK POWER--
--THAT IF ALLOWED TO LIVE, HE WOULD SERVE TA-NAKHT NOW AND INTO THE NEW AGE OF DARKNESS THAT WAS ON THE CUSP OF BEING BORN.
AND TA-NAKHT WAS MERCIFUL, ALLOWING HIM TO GO FREE, TO PROVE HIS FEALTY TO THE CHANGE ABOUT TO COME, TO COLLECT THE HORRORS AND FEARS OF THE OLD GODS,...

... TO HELP BRING ABOUT THE BIRTH OF THE NEW.

YOU WILL NEVER ESCAPE YOUR SINS, FOREVER BURIED BENEATH THE WEIGHT OF WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.

THAT IS IT, MY QUEEN. FIGHT, SO THAT I MAY CONTINUE TO REMIND YOU OF HOW FUTILE YOUR STRUGGLES WILL ALWAYS BE!

ROOORAAARRGH

YEEEEEAAH!

ENOUGH, PURVEYOR OF TORMENT!

I KNOW WHAT I HAVE DONE WAS WRONG, THAT THERE IS LIKELY NO AMOUNT OF PENANCE I MIGHT DO TO BE FORGIVEN!

BUT THAT DOES **NOT MEAN I WILL NOT TRY!**

THE SINNER SEEKS REDEMPTION...

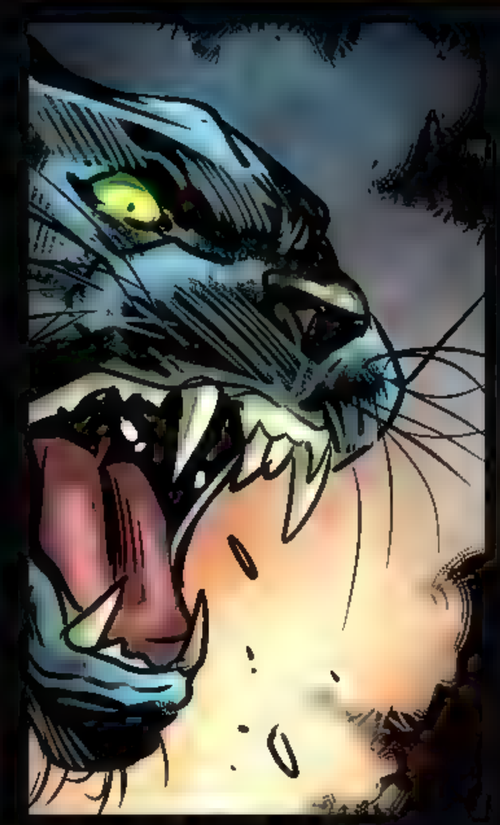
... WE SHALL SEE, LITTLE QUEEN, BUT FIRST I SUGGEST YOU DEAL WITH THE TRAITOR IN YOUR MIDST. YOUR HOST IS NOT AS BENEVOLENT AS HE SEEMS!
HE FEEDS ON THE FEARS OF HIS HOUSEGUESTS.
WAKE UP! THE CATS ARE NOT AS THEY APPEAR!
UNNGGGH! I ALWAYS SUSPECTED THERE WAS SOMETHING OFF ABOUT THEM.
THE ATMOSPHERE IS THICK WITH THE STINK OF FEAR. I'M GUESSING BA-PEF WAS USING THE CATS AS A WAY TO FEED HIS PERVERTED HUNGER.
WHATEVER HE IS UP TO ...
... HIS MEAL TIME IS ABOUT TO END!
A MIASMA OF NIGHTMARE HANGS IN THE AIR LIKE STORM CLOUDS. THE BEAST KNOWS THAT WHAT HAD BEEN DONE TO HER WAS HAPPENING HERE--
--BEHIND THESE DOORS AS WELL.

SHE DID NOT CARE FOR THAT.
ROOOOOOOOOARRR
THE RECEPTACLES OF FEAR FLEE AT THE SOUND OF HER RAGE, DESPERATE TO RETURN TO THEIR MASTER WITH THE NIGHTMARISH NUTRIENTS THEY HAVE ACQUIRED.
WHAT'S...WITH ALL THE RACKET? FEELS LIKE SOMEBODY SLIPPED ME A MICKEY.
WE'VE BEEN VIOLATED AS WE SLEPT--FED UPON.
"YEAH, AND IT LOOKS LIKE PANTHA MIGHT HAVE AN IDEA AS TO WHO'S RESPONSIBLE.
"RIGHT NOW I'D HATE TO BE THEM."
WHAT'S WRONG, MY CHILDREN? WHY HAVE YOU RETURNED BEFORE ...

GRRAAAAARRGHH

MY, AREN'T YOU A PRETTY THING...

AND YOUR TERRORS WERE ESPECIALLY-- POTENT!

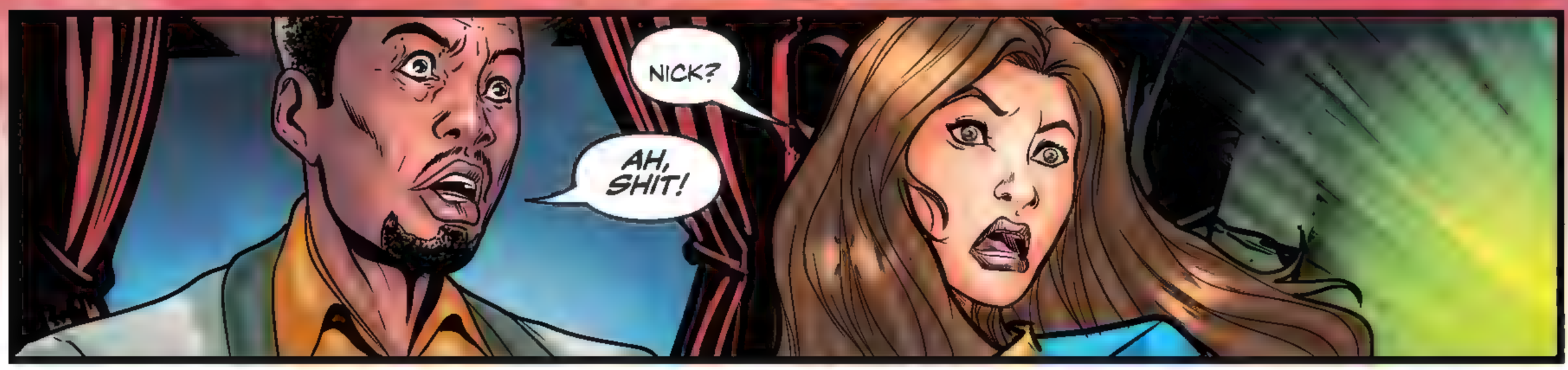


TA-NAKHT. TA-NAKHT ....
CHOOOMP
AAAHHIEEEE!
TA-NAKHT. TA-NAKHT. TA-NAKHT. TA-NAKHT . . .
ONE CAN SEE WHY TA-NAKHT WAS SO EXCITED TO KNOW THAT I HAD YOU BENEATH MY ROOF. YOU'RE MAGNIFICENT . . .
OH, THE NIGHTMARES YOU MUST HAVE CAUSED-- DELICIOUS.
TO THINK WE TRUSTED YOU.
YOU ALWAYS DID GIVE ME THE CREEPS.

NOT SO SCARY NOW.
"PERHAPS WE SHOULD GIVE HIM A TASTE OF HIS OWN TERRIFYING MEDICINE."
GRRRRRRR
OR MAYBE WE JUST LET HER EAT HIM.
THE TERRORS YOU WILL EXPERIENCE WHEN TA-NAKHT FINALLY TAKES YOU WILL BE EXQUISITE!

WHO IS THIS TA-NAKHT HE SPEAKS OF?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT MAYBE BA-PEF CAN TAKE US TO HIM.

OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT FINDING HIM ...
HUMP-BUMPH-DUH-THUMPH!
WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT ...


NICK?
AH, SHIT!

... MY MASTER WILL COME--
--TO YOU.

KRAK
THE GREAT TA-NAKHT WOULD HAVE WORDS WITH YOU!
NEXT: DIETIES & DEATH!

NEXT ISSUE

Beneath the remains of Chernobyl an epic battle is about to begin. After millennia of waiting and planning, everything is in place forTa-Nakht to fulfill its nefarious destiny. Captured by the god-eater, Pantha, Nick, and the Mortalists must somehow free themselves to prevent the birth of a new race of dark deities eager to plunge the world into shadow. The war against the old gods has begun, and the fate of humanity will depend on an Egyptian queen cursed to become the most savage of beasts!

STAN LEE'S ALLIANCES: ORPHANS INTRODUCED BY WRITERS LUKE LIEBERMAN & RYAN SILBERT

Though this is the first story to debut as a graphic novel, Stan's original signature medium, this is not the kickoff to the Alliances universe. Orphans follows the novel A Trick of Light and the A New Reality audio drama. For newcomers, how would you describe the Alliances mythos?

It all started with the question, as millions of fans heard Stan proclaim in his introduction to the Alliances Universe, "What is more real, a world we are born into or one we create ourselves?" How technology shapes our reality and our identity was the original question that propelled this new universe of characters and stories. The dream of Alliances was to not only find new fantastical cornersof our ever-evolving techno-sphere but to also jump into space and explore the kind of pulpy sci-fi stories that Stan began his career with in Tales of Suspense and Journey into Mystery and his cosmic curiosities leading up to the Marvel Age of comics.

Orphans really stands on its own, introducing a whole slew of new characters who find their home among the stars.

There are so many talented creators involved in telling these new tales, and it all goes back in part to Stan the Man. What roles did Stan Lee play in crafting this world and its characters? And how do you guys and the rest of the team then take those pieces and carry them out into the full final work that readers will be enjoying?

What is incredible about Stan is the breadth of his career – he had immersed himself in storytelling as diverse as Shakespeare, from poetry, to sci-fi serials.

And, by the time he was in his late thirties, he had already written thousands of comic pages,only to create the Fantastic Four, Spider-Man and the X-Men when he was in his forties. He never stopped generating ideas, he worked every day of his life - for decades on decades.

We spent years developing the framework and characters of what would become the Alliances universe with Stan. Orphans builds on this and includes a special prologue, the Traitor's Revenge, which he co-wrote and was one of the earliest scenes we developed with him when first embarking on this creative journey. This is really the origin story for Alliances, and we wanted to save it for the right moment. The idea of an alien Inventor enslaved, forced to use his genius to create weapons for his enemy and then turning his greatest device against his masters. The title is an homage to Stan's first published comic book work "A Traitors Revenge' which debuted in Captain America Comics #3.

The first stories in the series, A Trick of Light and New Reality, were launched as audio originals at Audible. Stan and our team were excited to invite readers to hear those tales and envision the stories for themselves, for each listener to become the artist, the Jack Kirby or Steve Ditko. But we knew that once we brought Alliances to the page, we needed a visionary artist, and we ended up with not just one…but two! Bill unleashed his imagination on Traitor's Revenge and Szymon balanced the cosmic stakes with the intimate characters moments beautifully.

In this graphic novel, fans will be meeting the Orphans, the ragtag, misfit crew taking on this quest to save the very fabric of reality. Can you tell us a bit about the cast of the book and which ones did you enjoy writing and fleshing out the most?

The Orphans are each the last of their kind, all their kin wiped out by the evil Hive. The Hive let them live, selecting them for captivity as genetic relics. Stan had a mantra when it came to storytelling. "It's all about the characters." They are the heart of the story - their relationships to one another. His attitude was, if the audience identify with the characters, then they will follow those characters on the most fantastical journeys. Little Boy is the Inventor's mentee and from an ancient species that ages slowly but he's basically an overgrown child. His best friend Haze is made out of pure vapor and sarcasm. Their pilot Rascal is a cynic with a heart of gold. And Critter is their pet monster. But there is no way we would describe the Orphans to you in a few words - it took us 180 pages to explore them.

The human, William Ackerson is a character with a lot of history in the Alliances Universe, this story meets up with him after the events of A New Reality, the second book on Audible (Wil Wheaton is the audio reader, check it out!). We meet him deep in space, plagued with his powers, searching for a cure. Then there is Samsi, our space samurai, and Ekol Razel our villain - he likes to eat lower life forms, and he considers everyone else a lower life form.

They are all left to deal with the aftermath of the Inventor's revenge - which includes a black hole the Inventor experimented on that is… malfunctioning.

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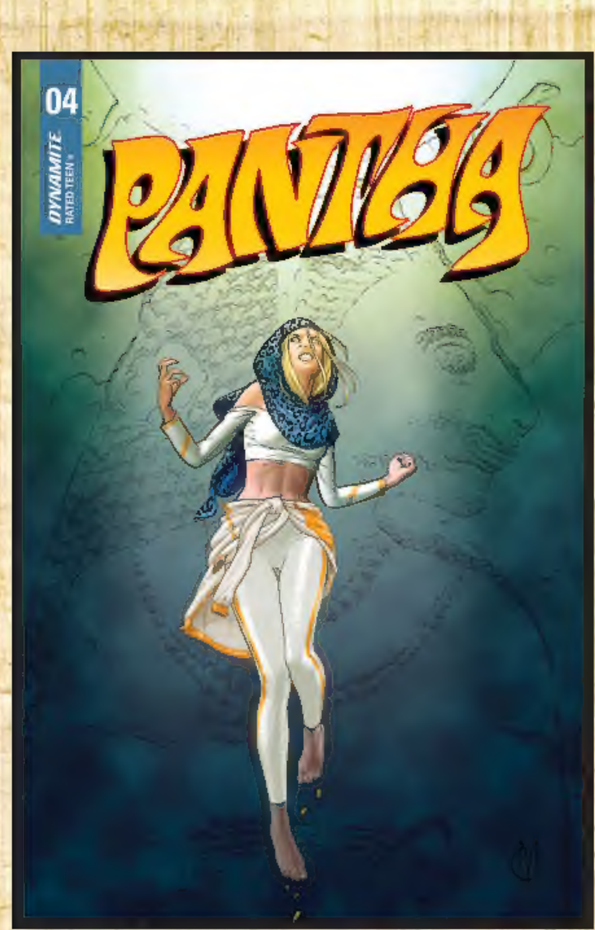

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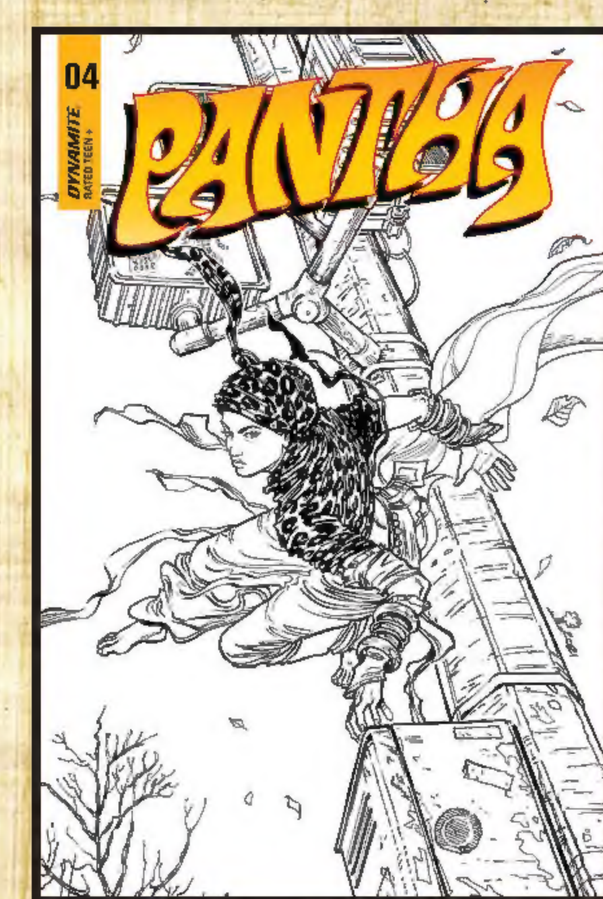

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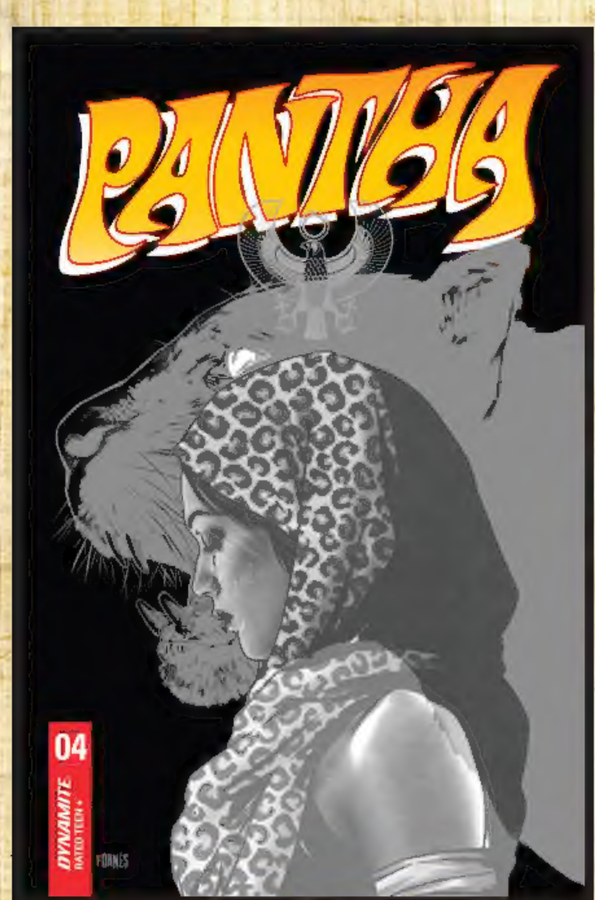

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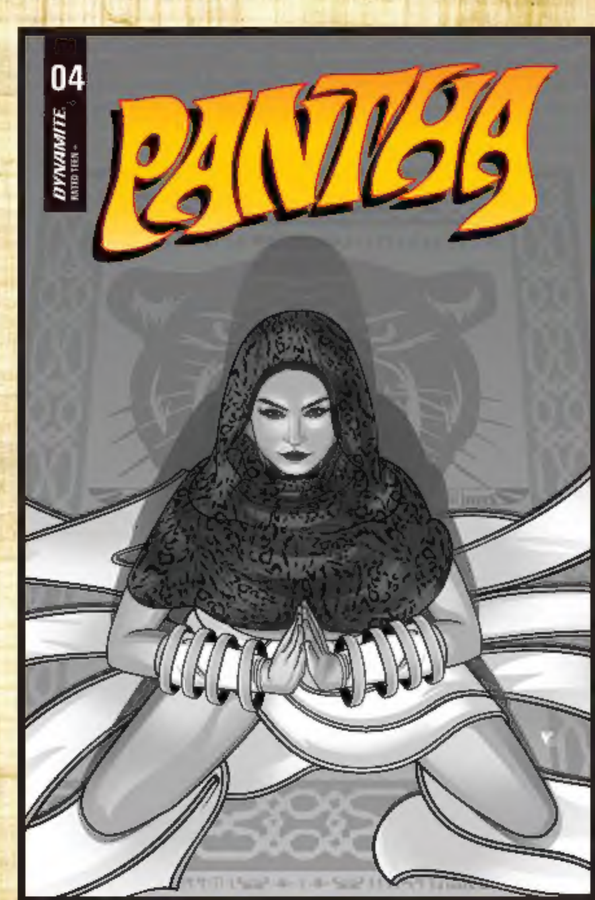

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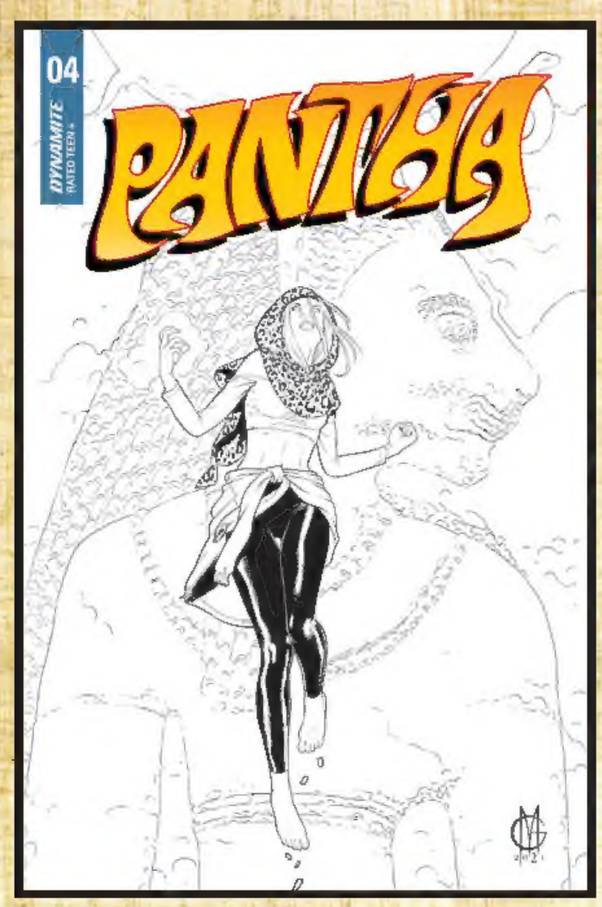
LIMITED EDITION COVER
art by AL BARRIONUEVO
color by SIGMUND TORRE

COVER L
FOC BONUS
JIM LEE HOMAGE
art by JOHN ROYLE
color by CANDICE HAN

COVER M
FOC 7 COPY VIRGIN
INCENTIVE COVER
art by ELENA PIANTA
color by IVAN NUNES

COVER N
FOC 7 COPY B&W
INCENTIVE COVER
art by AL BARRIONUEVO

COVER O
FOC 11 COPY VIRGIN JIM
LEE HOMAGE
art by JOHN ROYLE
color by CANDICE HAN



COVER P
FOC 11 COPY B&W
INCENTIVE COVER
art by GIUSEPPE MATTEONI

COVER Q
FOC 15 COPY VIRGIN
INCENTIVE COVER
art by VINCENT ASEO

D.R. & QUINCH

K6 NW